

Request for Proposals NH Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) Bureau of Rail and Transit is seeking proposals from qualified firms for the development, management and implementation of the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) for New Hampshire. The New Hampshire RTAP program provides technical assistance, research and training for rural transit and specialized transportation providers in New Hampshire.

The contractor will be responsible for developing and implementing the New Hampshire RTAP program for a period of three (3) years with yearly options for years 4 and 5. Proposal budgets shall be submitted on a per year basis for a total of three years beginning **JULY 1, 2013**. Proposals are due no later than 3:00 pm on **DECEMBER 21, 2012** at the following address:

Shelley Winters
NHDOT-Bureau of Rail & Transit
PO Box 483
Concord NH 03302

Qualified firms shall have transit training experience and a thorough knowledge of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP). The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, in the sole judgment of the Department.

Basic information on NHDOT's RTAP program:

NHDOT's approximate annual RTAP apportionment is \$100,000

There are currently seven 5311-funded transit systems, one intercity bus contractor, seven small urban or commuter bus systems, and 17 5310 subrecipients that operate in NH and have a contractual relationship with NHDOT.

Scope of Service/Responsibilities

The selected contractor will provide technical assistance that will be useful to beneficiaries of the NHRTAP. Under this arrangement:

- The contractor will have the lead responsibility for overall management of the NHRTAP, which includes: planning and preparing the annual work program (to be provided to NHDOT for grant submission); supporting and assisting NHDOT with FTA grant submissions as required; developing training materials; promoting and delivering training courses; conducting outreach and coordination with other organizations involved in rural public transportation in NH; convening quarterly RTAP Advisory Council meetings; facilitating special events (workshops, annual Tri-State Transit Conference, NTI trainings, etc) as needed; and monitoring the success of the NHRTAP through user input and feedback.
- The contractor will also have the lead responsibility for maintaining the NHRTAP website, providing a contact telephone number for remote assistance; distributing resource materials (including National RTAP materials); collecting and maintaining available information resources on relevant rural public transit topics; developing timely information briefs and program updates (via website or email); and creating, storing, and distributing relevant training materials.

Task I: Project Planning & Coordination

The selected contractor will assume primary responsibility for administration and management of the NHRTAP. Subtasks include:

- Develop the annual program (work plan) and corresponding budget based on recommendations and input by the RTAP Advisory Committee for approval by the NHDOT
- Submit quarterly progress reports to NHDOT
- Schedule and hold, at a minimum, quarterly NHRTAP Advisory Committee meetings

Task II: Development & Promotion of Training Program

The selected contractor will develop and implement a comprehensive training program designed to meet the needs of NH's rural transit operators. Subtasks include:

- Prepare and conduct surveys of NHRTAP-eligible agencies to assess annual training needs
- Update the current NHRTAP training materials for compliance with state and federal guidelines and improved effectiveness, or develop new training materials that meet requirements for the following courses: 8-hour Passenger Assistance Training, 4-hour Passenger Assistance Refresher, 4-hour Emergency Evacuation Procedures Training (*Sample copies provided for review*)
- Recommend and develop additional training modules, add-ons or stand-alone courses
- Develop a training calendar to include statewide training coverage and trainings in Defensive Driving, Passenger Assistance Training, Passenger Assistance Training Refresher, and Emergency Evacuation.
 - Minimum trainings offered:
 - Three (3) 8-hour Passenger Assistance Trainings per quarter
 - Three (3) 4-hour Emergency Evacuation Procedures per quarter
 - Three (3) 4-hour Passenger Assistance Training Refreshers per quarter
 - Twelve (12) Defensive Driving classes per quarter
 - Note: DDC classes can either be private firm-provided courses or can include guaranteed slots in publicly advertised and available courses
 - Training sites must be statewide to provide geographic coverage and course availability for NHDOT subrecipients who are geographically dispersed.
- Publish or make available the training schedule for a minimum of three (3) months
- Identify other transit-related courses (e.g. NTI workshops) that would meet goals of NHRTAP and facilitate up to four (4) per year.
- Register participants for training and technical assistance sessions (telephone and web-based)
- Schedule qualified instructors for training classes.
 - Unless otherwise proposed by contractor, to be considered a “qualified instructor” an instructor must teach at least two classes per year for the course in which they are “qualified.”
- Hold at least one mandatory RTAP instructor meeting per year
- Locate training sites, prepare training materials, and provide training equipment for Defensive Driving, Passenger Assistance, Passenger Assistance Refresher and Emergency Evacuation as needed.
 - Current materials include: student handbooks, evaluation forms, presentation material (PowerPoint)
- Track training attendance and report on participation by agency, region and course
 - Provide a monthly report on all training attended by agency, region and course
 - Prepare ad hoc reports for DOT staff as needed
- Issue certificate of completion to each participant for all RTAP training sessions and maintain a training database by project year
- Develop and train new instructors per RTAP Instructor Policy or another policy proposed by the contractor and approved by NHDOT.

Task III: Technical Assistance

The selected contractor will assume primary responsibility for identifying and providing technical assistance opportunities. Subtasks include:

- Facilitate special events (workshops, technical assistance events, etc) on an as-needed basis (as requested by NHDOT) up to four (4) times per year.
 - Plan and execute all aspects of the event including, but not limited to:
 - Registration (including publicizing & inviting attendees)

- Secure host location, catering, instructors, facilitators, etc.
 - All allowable expenses shall be included as part of the approximate budget for the task (scope of services) and proposal should indicate whether these “special events” will be subcontracted or if in-house staff will be used.
 - Sample topics for “special events” have included: Cost Allocation, Drug & Alcohol plans, Title VI training, Marketing workshop
- Make travel arrangements, as required.
- Track separately and handle finances (receivables & payables)
 - Note: NHDOT is part of the annual Tri-State Transit Conference with Maine DOT and the Vermont Agency of Transportation. NHDOT is the host every three years and is scheduled to host again in the fall of 2015.

Task IV: Scholarship Program

The selected contractor will assume primary responsibility for administering the NHRTAP Scholarship Program. Subtasks include:

- Review scholarship policy and recommend and implement approved policy changes
- Review, process and track all NHRTAP Scholarship request forms (approximately 50 per year)
- Provide a monthly report on all approved Scholarship requests by agency
- Maintain records of expenses and balance
- Reimburse transit agencies for eligible expenses
 - Note: The annual scholarship expenditure for the last three years has averaged approximately \$30,000 per year. This expense should be included as a separate line in the budget for the scope of services, but is considered pass through money. This figure has been pre-populated in the required Budget form that you must use and the figure cannot be changed.

Task V: NHRTAP Information Center

The selected contractor will assume primary responsibility for collecting, administering and disseminating information and products related to the NHRTAP. Subtasks include:

- Assist the Department in developing RTAP related policies and procedures (e.g. payment eligibility, scholarship eligibility, training requirements, etc.)
- Enhance and maintain the NHRTAP website (currently: www.nh.gov/dot/programs/nhrtap) to facilitate information sharing and enhance the statewide program delivery that must, at a minimum, include:
 - Calendar of training and technical assistance
 - Registration for training and workshops
 - Calendar of Advisory Committee meetings
 - Meeting minutes and agendas
 - News and updates
 - Provide a point of contact for agencies and individuals seeking information pertaining to rural public transportation.
- Store and maintain NHRTAP resources and inventory
 - Training materials (multi-media equipment, course materials, training aids, etc.)
- Prepare of an annual report on RTAP accomplishments and future recommendations
- Facilitate NHRTAP Advisory Committee meetings
 - Arrange, at a minimum, quarterly NHRTAP Advisory Committee meetings and record minutes
 - Provide minutes from NHRTAP Advisory Committee meetings and post on RTAP website
 - Engage and recruit Advisory Committee members to provide a broad representation of program beneficiaries

- Create NHRTAP promotional materials for distribution to program beneficiaries
- Monitor rural transit-related legislation and regulations that apply to the delivery of RTAP-related products and trainings and preparing timely summaries for dissemination to NHDOT and rural transit operators
- Provide regular updates to the NH Transit Association (NHTA) via monthly meetings
 - In-person attendance or correspondence with NHTA liaison in advance of meeting

Task VI: Financial Management, Project Management and Administration

The selected contractor will assign a Project Coordinator who shall meet with NHDOT staff to discuss objectives of the contract and project. Subtasks include:

- Process, track and report on all RTAP related expenses (Training, Technical Support, Scholarships, Related Support Services)
- Make payments to vendors for eligible expenses (*payments made to vendors for training and technical assistance over the last 3 years have been provided, but do not include payments made to RTAP instructors*)
- Maintain financial records of expenditures in an electronic format in accordance with acceptable accounting procedures and federal guidelines
- Prepare quarterly and annual financial reports (format to be proposed by contractor and approved by NHDOT)
 - Provide a quarterly report of all expenditures. Provide an annual end of fiscal year financial report for all related expenses. Quarterly reports will be due October, January, April and July. Annual report due in July
- Submit other project reports and deliverables as described above in a timely fashion

Proposal Evaluations and Selection Process

Proposals will be evaluated for responsiveness to the Request for Proposals by a review committee, which will include staff of the NH DOT Bureau of Rail & Transit. Review will be based on the following criteria:

1. Proposed approach
2. Qualifications and experience of the firm
3. Qualifications of project staff
4. Cost Proposal
5. Innovative or Supplemental services

Award of this contract will be determined by the proposal that offers to provide the greatest value to the beneficiaries of the NHRTAP, according to the following criteria:

1. Proposed Approach to Program Delivery

The overall approach to the requirements of the program. The proposal should respond to specific requirements of the scope of services and clearly explain how these requirements will be accomplished. Attention will be given to the firm's understanding of the objectives of FTA RTAP program goals & requirements and the New Hampshire RTAP program and how those objectives will be met by their proposal.

Thoroughness and quality of the firm's approach to the following elements included in the Scope of Work:

- Update training material for existing courses & develop additional courses as necessary
- Develop RTAP-related policies
- Financial records of expenditures and reports

- Develop training calendar
- Facilitate RTAP Advisory Committee meetings
- Facilitate special events
- Track and report on training participation
- Annual Instructors meeting
- Maintain RTAP website and resource library

2. Organizational Capabilities and Experience of the Firm

NHDOT is also particularly interested in firms with the following characteristics:

- Demonstrated track record for managing similar scale projects such as statewide or federally-funded projects of this magnitude
- Strong analytical skills
- Performance-based firm with an entrepreneurial approach to problem solving
- Ability to revive or revamp a stagnant program

3. Staff Qualifications

The individual qualifications and work experiences of proposed project personnel, especially the Project Coordinator, will be reviewed and the firm must show that it will be able to assign employees with relevant skill sets and knowledge to the project, which include: knowledge of information dissemination techniques and training and technical assistance methods; organizational skills to coordinate diverse individuals and organizations benefiting from the program; knowledge of current Federal policy initiatives related to rural public transit; and familiarity with rural transit operational issues. Key staff should be identified by project area.

Detail the subcontractors, if any, that would be used and what services they would perform.

4. Cost Proposal

The cost proposal **must** be submitted with the overall project proposal and must be submitted in total US Dollars. The NHDOT Project Manager will score the cost proposals by prorating with the lowest cost proposal given the highest score. The formula is as follows: Calculation of points awarded to subsequent proposals will use the lowest dollar proposal amount as a constant numerator and the dollar amount of the firm being scored as the denominator. This number is then multiplied by the number of points given to the cost section of the RFP, resulting in the cost proposal score.

$$\frac{\text{Lowest Proposed Cost}}{\text{(constant number)}} \times \frac{\text{Other Proposer's Cost}}{\text{(varies per proposal being scored)}} \times \text{Maximum evaluation points given to cost} = \text{Score}$$

Please submit a Cost Proposal for the Scope of Services (Tasks I-V) on enclosed form. If you are also proposing “Additional or Supplemental Services” that have an added cost to them, please do not include those expenses in your Original Cost Proposal and provide the supplemental services and corresponding costs separately. You may detail “supplemental services” costs on the Supplemental Services Cost Form provided or submit your own version.

To provide a basis for comparison, firms must submit the following generalized cost information for each year of the three-year contract:

- **Labor Costs** – Provide a roster of individuals who will be available and assigned to work under the contract. List the fully loaded hourly rate for each individual. List subcontractor’s costs separately using the same criteria.

- Overhead – Express as a fixed percent of direct labor costs and list items included in overhead.
- Travel – Estimated transportation, lodging, meals, and expenses. All travel costs are limited by the rates allowed under the applicable FTA travel directives in place at the time travel is undertaken and are usually congruent with GSA travel rates.
- Other Direct Expenses – Materials, specific equipment, software, etc.
- Training – Include number of courses and unit of pricing (by hour, by course, on-site, at vendor's location, etc.)
- Profit – Express as a percent and dollar amount.
- Pass-through expenses for scholarships -- This amount will not be included in the cost proposal evaluation.

5. Innovative or Supplemental Services

Additional services, tasks, programs, projects or items that were not included in the required Scope of Work, but that your firm proposes to provide. Submit budget for these tasks separately. If there is no additional cost, please indicate so, but ensure that you fully explain the innovative or supplemental services you propose to provide.

EVALUATIONS

Scoring Weights:

Proposed Approach	35 points
Qualifications and experience of the firm	25 points
Qualification of project staff	10 points
Cost proposal	20 points
Innovative or Supplemental services	10 points

Firm selection and notification is anticipated to be in February 2013, but is subject to change.

SUBMISSIONS

Firms must submit their proposal on or before **3:00pm, DECEMBER 21, 2012** to:

Shelley Winters
NHDOT—Bureau of Rail & Transit
PO Box 483
Concord NH 03302

All proposals must be date-stamped by NHDOT staff by the stated time to be considered. NHDOT does not accept facsimile or email submitted proposals.

Proposals shall be submitted in a sealed package and contain: one (1) original (identify as such) plus four (4) copies of all materials required for acceptance of their proposal. Printed copies should be typed and submitted on double-sided 8.5"x11" paper and be bound securely. Proposals shall be no more than eight (8) pages, excluding attachments, resumes, cost proposal forms, signed federal clauses, and other additional materials or samples provided.

Questions about the project should be directed to NHDOT Public Transportation Administrator, Shelley Winters, via email; phone calls will not be accepted. Please email Ms. Winters at: Swinters@dot.state.nh.us

All proposals, upon submission, become the property of NHDOT. The expense of preparing and submitting a proposal is the sole responsibility of the firm. NHDOT reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP. This solicitation in no way obligates NHDOT to award a contract.

Top-scoring firms, based on the evaluation of the written proposal, may be required to have interviews/presentations to support or clarify their proposals, if requested by NHDOT. NHDOT will make every reasonable attempt to schedule each interview/presentation at a time that is agreeable to the firm. Failure of the firm to complete a scheduled interview/presentation to NHDOT may result in rejection of that firm's proposal. Interviews/presentations, if scheduled, will be part of the final selection process.

NHDOT reserves the right to negotiate the terms of the contract, including the award amount, with the selected firm prior to entering into a contract. If contract negotiations cannot be concluded successfully with the highest-ranked firm, NHDOT may negotiate a contract with the second-ranked firm.

NHDOT Rail & Transit Bid Protest procedure

Protests will only be accepted by NHDOT-Rail & Transit from prospective bidders or bidders whose direct economic interest would be affected by the award of a contract or refusal to award a contract. NHDOT-Rail & Transit will consider all such protests, whether submitted before or after the award of a contract. All protests must be in writing and conform to the following requirements:

1. Be clear and concise.
2. Provide name, address and telephone numbers of protestor.
3. Identify the project or contract.
4. Provide a clear and detailed statement of the legal and factual grounds of the protest including copies of all relevant documents.
5. Provide a statement as to what relief is requested.
6. Be addressed to the Bureau of Rail & Transit and be filed in writing at the Department's office at 7 Hazen Drive (PO Box 483), Concord, NH 03302.

Pre-bid or solicitation protests must be received by the Department at least 10 working days before bid opening or proposal deadline. If the written protest is not received by the time specified, the bid or evaluation process shall continue. Upon receipt of the written protest, NHDOT-Rail & Transit will determine if the bid opening or date of receipt for proposals should be postponed. If the bid opening or due date is postponed, an appropriate addendum will be issued regarding a rescheduling of the bid opening. Any protest may be withdrawn at any time before NHDOT-Rail & Transit has issued its decision.

Any party aggrieved by an award of a contract may protest to the NHDOT-Rail & Transit, in writing, within 15 working days after of bid opening or proposal deadline.

Post-award protests must be received by the Department within 10 working days of the announcement of contract award.

Such protests shall include the detailed facts leading up to the protest. The protests will be referred to the Commissioner of Transportation or his designee for resolution. Following a decision of the Commissioner, appeals may be filed in accordance with the Department's Rules, Tra 200. Pursuant to Tra 201, the Department conducts adjudicative hearings in contested cases and nonadjudicative hearings for rulemaking or administration of programs within the department's jurisdiction. The Department may reconsider decisions in light of previously unknown data or errors of law or regulation.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will only entertain a protest that alleges the Department failed to follow its protest procedures or alleges there has been a violation of Federal law or regulation. A protest to FTA must be filed in accordance with Circular 4220.1F or revisions, within 5 working days of the date the protestor knew or should have known of the violation.

Attachments Provided:

- FTA Clauses—these must be signed and submitted with your proposal
 - Cost Proposal Form—required for budget submission for Scope of Services and includes an form that can be used for “supplemental services” budget
 - Samples of current NHRTAP training materials: NHPAT, NHPAT Refresher, NH Emergency Evacuation Procedures
 - Summary of past three years of NHRTAP Trainings by agency & class type
 - Summary of past three years of NHRTAP expenditures by categories: training, technical assistance, scholarships, etc.
 - Summary of past three years scholarship reimbursements by agency & event
 - Summary of training vendors reimbursed in past three years
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